**ORD SEPW Questions**

**Boxer:**

16. The Agency has requested additional funds to support research into the development of sustainable molecular designs for materials, which EPA anticipates will help manufacturers, including of producers of nanotechnology materials, create safer chemicals and products. Could you please describe how the Agency will spend these resources, the particular types of products and processes that EPA will focus such funding on, and the anticipated health and economic benefits of this program?

20. Please describe the steps that EPA has taken to assess and address potential threats to public health from hexavalent chromium (chrome 6) in drinking water? In your answer, include the Agency's timeline for the completion of any risk assessment and the use of such information in a determination of whether to create a drinking water standard or health advisory for hexavalent chromium in drinking water?

**Inhofe: Hexavalent Chromium**

18. EPA needs an occurrence database to identify the levels of hexavalent chromium in drinking water and including hexavalent chromium in the final unregulated contaminants monitoring rule will provide EPA with these data. We are also told that EPA, in collaboration with laboratories and utilities, has just released an analytical method that can detect hexavalent chromium at levels lower than 1 part per billion. Now that you have that method, we are told it takes about 3 years for EPA to build the occurrence database. Is that correct? When will the occurrence data gathering begin?

20. In previous testimony, Dr. Anastas outlined how EPA is working to respond to criticisms from GAO, National Academy of Sciences, and others about quality and timeliness in the IRIS assessment process. Dr. Anastas outlined a series of activities that EPA is taking to improve IRIS assessments. I want to thank EPA for responding to calls for improving the overall IRIS process. I assume that among the reasons that EPA is restarting the oral assessment for hexavalent chromium is to ensure that:

- EPA has the time to apply these improvements to the hexavalent chromium assessment;
- EPA gets a chance to respond to the many critical comments from EPA's expert peer review panel on the draft;
- Your staff gets an opportunity to review and include the most recent studies that will supplement the science database on hexavalent chromium with information relevant to humans and current drinking water levels.

In previous hearings before this Committee, we have asked that as head of EPA you ensure that decisions made on contaminants in water are made based upon the best information and most

current science. Will your next assessment of hexavalent chromium address all of my points?

**Perchlorate**

24. Given the notably large number of peer-reviewed studies available on health effects of perchlorate—and a National Academy of Science panel report—how will the agency involve scientists outside the agency to achieve the statutory standard, the "best available science"?

**Vitter:**

1.I would like to note in your new Scientific Integrity Policy you suggest "scientific research and results" should be "presented openly, and with integrity, accuracy and timeliness". On the issue of timeliness can you explain why it took you a month and a half to share with my office the PWG report on the Ramazzini Institute, and in particular why it took so long if it had been completed in November? In addition, can you also share what actions are being taken on all chemical assessments that integrated Ramazzini's work?

2. What is EPA doing to ensure the quality of the research EPA utilizes meets sufficient standards for "sound science" so we don't run into a Ramazzini type situation again in the future?

4. 1 know that following the National Academy of Sciences' review of formaldehyde, your agency received bipartisan concerns related to other chemical assessment work IRIS was completing. Those concerns led to 2012 appropriations providing funding for additional NAS reviews. Can you provide a status update on where negotiations are with the NAS on those reviews and what chemicals you anticipate NAS reviewing?

23. Congress recently passed legislation directing EPA to make improvements to the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS). How much funding has EPA designated to fully implement the recommendations outlined by the NAS in chapter 7 of the formaldehyde report?

26. I continue to remain concerned about the ongoing non-cancer methanol IRIS assessment that EPA is conducting. As you know, EPA's own External Peer Review panel criticized the Agency's non-cancer draft assessment for being poorly written and requiring significant revisions, and for proposing reference concentration levels that are overly stringent. Based on the comments EPA will have to make significant changes to the draft assessment and its proposed reference levels. Under EPA's current process, EPA can ignore some or all of the peer review comments, and after interagency review publish its final determinations. In keeping with the spirit of an open and transparent scientific process, will you commit to allowing the

public to comment on the draft assessment after the Agency incorporates the External Peer Review panel's comments? If not, is there any legal or regulatory provision that is prohibiting you from complying with this request?